

AMENDMENTS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer, comprising a polymer polymerized from
at least one trifunctional or higher functional initiator, and
at least two different monomers forming the backbone of the polymer, wherein and
at least one of said monomers is a branching monomer selected from the group consisting of carbonate monomers.
2. (Original) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein said at least two different monomers are cyclic.
3. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least two different monomers forming the backbone of the polymer comprise[[s]]at least one backbone monomer and at least one backbone comonomer[[],] .
4. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein said at least one backbone comonomer imparts disorder in the backbone monomer chain.
5. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to any of the claims 1-4, wherein the at least one backbone comonomer is effective to introduce amorphous regions in the backbone monomer chain.
6. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least two different monomers forming the backbone of the polymer are selected from the group consisting of lactone monomers.

7. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 6, wherein the lactone monomers are chosen from the group consisting of ϵ -caprolactone, δ -valerolactone, γ -butyrolactone, β -propiolactone, and mixtures thereof, and wherein the lactone monomers are optionally substituted with one or more alkyl or aryl substituents at any non-carbonyl carbon atom along the ring, including compounds in which two substituents are contained on the same carbon atom and mixtures thereof.
8. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 3, wherein the at least one backbone monomer comprises ϵ -caprolactone.
9. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 3, wherein the at least one backbone monomer has a Tg below -40° C.
10. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 3, wherein the at least one backbone comonomer comprises δ -valerolactone.
11. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein said degradable polymer is polymerized by metal catalyzed ring-opening.
12. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least one monomer is selected from the group consisting of cyclic carbonate monomers.
13. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least one monomer is selected from the group consisting of trimethylene carbonate, 5-alkyl-1,3-dioxan-2-one, 5,5-dialkyl-1,3-dioxan-2-one, or 5-alkyl-5-alkyloxycarbonyl-1,3-dioxan-2-one, ethylene carbonate, 3-ethyl-3-hydroxymethyl trimethylene carbonate, propylene carbonate, trimethylene carbonate, trimethylolpropane monocarbonate, 4,6-dimethyl-1,3-propylene carbonate, 2,2-dimethyl trimethylene carbonate, 1,3-dioxepan-2-one and mixtures thereof.

14. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of carbonate monomers provides a means for introducing additional branching, crosslinking, or a combination thereof to the elastomeric polymer during ring-opening polymerization.
15. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein said at least one trifunctional or higher functional initiator comprises a polyol.
16. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the initiator is selected from the group of glycerol, trimethylolpropane, pentaerythritol, dipentaerythritol, ethoxylated or propoxylated polyamines, molecules with multiple hydroxyl or other reactive groups, and mixtures thereof.
17. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 3[[1]], wherein the degradable chewing gum polymer is polymerized from:
about 20 to 80 wt % of the at least one backbone monomer,
about 19.5 to 79.5 wt % of the at least one backbone comonomer, and
about 0.5 to 25 wt % of the at least one monomer selected from the group consisting of carbonate monomers.
18. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 17, wherein the degradable chewing gum polymer is polymerized from:
about 0.01 to 1.0 wt % of the at least one initiator.
19. (Previously presented) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the chewing gum properties of the polymer are adjusted by selection of a suitable functional number of the multifunctional initiator.
20. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the rheological properties of the degradable chewing gum polymer [[is]]are controlled by adjusting the functional number of the at least one trifunctional or higher functional initiator.

21-22. (canceled)

23. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 6, wherein the molecular weight of the lactone monomers ~~[[are]]~~is within the range of 50-16000 g/mol.

24. (Currently amended) Degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1, wherein the molecular weight of the carbonate monomers ~~[[are]]~~is within the range of 50-15000 g/mol.

25. (Previously presented) Chewing gum comprising the degradable polymer according to claim 1; and chewing gum ingredients.

26. (Original) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum ingredients comprise flavoring agents.

27. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 26, wherein said flavoring agents comprise~~[[s]]~~ natural and synthetic flavorings in the form of natural vegetable components, essential oils, essences, extracts, powders, including acids or other substances capable of affecting the taste profile

28. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 26, wherein said chewing gum comprises flavoring agents in an amount of 0.01 to about 30 wt %, said percentage being based on the total weight of the chewing gum.

29. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 26, wherein said chewing gum comprises flavoring agents in an amount of 0.2 to about 4 wt %, said percentage being based on the total weight of the chewing gum

30. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 26, wherein said flavoring agent comprises water soluble ingredients.

31. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 30, wherein said water soluble flavoring agent comprises acids.
32. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 26, wherein said flavoring agent comprises water insoluble ingredients.
33. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum ingredients comprise[[s]] sweeteners.
34. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 33, wherein said sweetener comprises bulk sweeteners.
35. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 34, wherein the chewing gum comprises bulk sweeteners in the amount of about 5 to about 95% by weight of the chewing gum.
36. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 33, wherein said sweetener comprises high intensity sweeteners.
37. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 36, wherein the high intensity sweeteners comprise[[s]] sucralose, aspartame, salts of acesulfame, alitame, saccharin and its salts, cyclamic acid and its salts, glycyrrhizin, dihydrochalcones, thaumatin, monellin, sterioside, alone or in combination.
38. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 36, wherein the chewing gum comprises high intensity sweeteners in an amount of about 0 to about 1% by weight of the chewing gum.
39. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein the chewing gum comprises at least one softener.

40. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 39, wherein the at least one softener comprises tallow, hydrogenated tallow, hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated vegetable oils, cocoa butter, glycerol monostearate, glycerol triacetate, lecithin, mono-, di- and triglycerides, acetylated monoglycerides, fatty acids, -stearic acid, palmitic acid, oleic acid, linoleic acids, waxes, poly glycol esters or mixtures thereof.
41. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 39, wherein the chewing gum comprises softeners in the amount of about 0 to about 18% by weight of the chewing gum.
42. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum ingredients comprise active ingredients.

43. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 42, wherein said active ingredients are selected from the group consisting of: Acetaminophen, Acetylsalicylic acid, Buprenorphine, Bromhexin, Celcoxib, Codeine, Diphenhydramin, Diclofenac, Etoricoxib, Ibuprofen, Indometacin, Ketoprofen, Lumiracoxib, Morphine, Naproxen, Oxycodon, Parecoxib, Piroxicam, Rofecoxib, Tenoxicam, Tramadol, Valdecoxib, Calciumcarbonat, Magaldrate, Disulfiram, Bupropion, Nicotine, Azithromycin, Clarithromycin, Clotrimazole, Erythromycin, Tetracycline, Granisetron, Ondansetron, Prometazin, Tropisetron, Brompheniramine, Ceterizin, leco-Ceterizin, Chlorcyclizine, Chlorpheniramin, Chlorpheniramin, Difenhydramine, Doxylamine, Fenofenadin, Guaifenesin, Loratidin, des-Loratidin, Phenyltoloxamine, Promethazin, Pyridamine, Terfenadin, Troxerutin, Methyldopa, Methylphenidate, Benzalcon, Chloride, Benzeth, Chloride, Cetylpyrid, Chloride, Chlorhexidine, Ecabet-sodium, Haloperidol, Allopurinol, Colchicine, Theophylline, Propanolol, Prednisolone, Prednisone, Fluoride, Urea, Miconazole, Actot, Glibenclamide, Glipizide, Metformin, Miglitol, Repaglinide, Rosiglitazone, Apomorfin, Cialis, Sildenafil, Vardenafil, Diphenoxylate, Simethicone, Cimetidine, Famotidine, Ranitidine, Ratinidine, cetirizin, Loratadine, Aspirin, Benzocaine, Dextrometorphan, Ephedrine, Phenylpropanolamine, Pseudoephedrine, Cisapride, Domperidone, Metoclopramide, Acyclovir, Dioctylsulfosucc, Phenolphthalein, Almotriptan, Eletriptan, Ergotamine, Migea, Naratriptan, Rizatriptan, Sumatriptan, Zolmitriptan, Aluminium salts, Calcium salts, Ferro salts, Silver salts, Zinc-salte, Amphotericin B, Chlorhexidine, Miconazole, Triamcinolonacetamid, Melatonine, Phenobarbital, Caffeine, Benzodiazepiner, Hydroxyzine, Meprobamate, Phenothiazine, Buclizine, Brometazine, Cinnarizine, Cyclizine, Difenhydramine, Dimenhydrinate, Buflomedil, Amphetamine, Caffeine, Ephedrine, Orlistat, Phenylephedrine, Phenylpropanolamin, Pseudoephedrine, Sibutramin, Ketoconazole, Nitroglycerin, Nystatin, Progesterone, Testosterone, Vitamin B12, Vitamin C, Vitamin A, Vitamin D, Vitamin E, Pilocarpin, Aluminiumaminoacetat, Cimetidine, Esomeprazole, Famotidine, Lansoprazole, Magnesiumoxide, Nizatide and/or Ratinidine or derivatives and mixtures thereof.

44. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein the chewing gum is substantially free of non-biodegradable polymers.
45. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein the chewing gum comprises filler.
46. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 45, wherein the chewing gum comprises filler in an amount of about 0 to about 50% by weight of the chewing gum.
47. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein the chewing gum comprises at least one coloring agent.
48. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, the chewing gum is coated with an outer coating.
49. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 48, wherein the outer coating is a hard coating.
50. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 49, wherein the hard coating is a coating selected from the group consisting of a sugar coatings, a sugarless coating, and a combination thereof.
51. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 49, wherein the hard coating comprises 50 to 100% by weight of a polyol selected from the group consisting of sorbitol, maltitol, mannitol, xylitol, erythritol, lactitol and isomalt.
52. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 51, wherein the outer coating is an edible film comprising at least one component selected from the group consisting of an edible film-forming agent and a wax.

53. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 52, wherein the film-forming agent is selected from the group consisting of a cellulose derivative, a modified starch, a dextrin, gelatine, shellac, gum arabic, zein, a vegetable gum, a synthetic polymer and any combination thereof.
54. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 48, wherein the outer coating comprises at least one additive component selected from the group consisting of a binding agent, a moisture absorbing component, a film forming agent, a dispersing agent, an antisticking component, a bulking agent, a flavo[[u]]ring agent, a coloring agent, a pharmaceutically or cosmetically active component, a lipid component, a wax component, a sugar, an acid and an agent capable of accelerating the after-chewing degradation of the degradable polymer.
55. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 48, wherein the outer coating is a soft coating.
56. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 55, wherein the soft coating comprises a sugar free coating agent.
57. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum comprises conventional chewing gum polymers or resins.
58. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein the ~~at least one~~ biodegradable polymer comprises at least 5% of the chewing gum polymers.
59. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein all ~~the~~ biodegradable polymers comprised in the chewing gum comprise[[s]] at least 25%, of the chewing gum polymers.
60. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein all ~~the~~ biodegradable polymers comprised in the chewing gum comprise[[s]] at least 80%, of the chewing gum polymers.

61. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum comprises
said ~~at least one biodegradable polyester copolymer~~ forming a plasticizer of the chewing gum and
at least one non-biodegradable conventional elastomer.
62. (Currently amended) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum comprises
said ~~at least one biodegradable polyester copolymer~~ forming an elastomer of the chewing gum and
at least one non-biodegradable conventional natural or synthetic resin.
63. (Previously presented) Chewing gum according to claim 25, wherein said chewing gum comprises
at least one biodegradable elastomer in the amount of about 0.5 to about 70% wt of the chewing gum,
at least one biodegradable plasticizer in the amount of about 0.5 to about 70% wt of the chewing gum and
at least one chewing gum ingredient chosen from the group consisting of softeners, sweeteners, flavoring agents, active ingredients and fillers in the amount of about 2 to about 80% wt of the chewing gum.
64. (Previously presented) Gum base comprising at least one degradable chewing gum polymer according to claim 1.